

Advertised: **May 15, 2018**

**Office of Civil Rights**

**REQUEST for LETTERS of INTEREST (RFLOI)**

**North Carolina Department of Transportation  
Equal Employment Opportunity /Affirmative Action**

**TITLE:** **Comprehensive EEO, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy** Assessment, Development, and Implementation

**USING AGENCY:** North Carolina Department of Transportation  
**Office of Civil Rights**

**ISSUE DATE:** **May 15, 2018**

**SUBMITTAL DEADLINE:** **May 29, 2018**

**ISSUING AGENCY:** North Carolina Department of Transportation  
Office of Civil Rights

**PURPOSE OF THE RFLOI**

The NCDOT recognizes that people are their most important asset, and as such they are committed to diversity and inclusion, equal opportunity, and affirmative action. This full commitment emanates throughout the department’s organizational structure, infrastructure, and culture; and is also reflected in its human resources policies, procedures, and management practices.

In 2018, the NCDOT continues the implementation of a robust EEO and Affirmative Action Plan, endorsed and fully supported by the organization’s governing authorities and senior leaders. The plan has many prominent features, including clearly stated metrics that have created a positive momentum for the achievement of EEO and affirmative action goals.

However, an analysis of actual results of the 2018 NCDOT EEO and Affirmative Action Plan has indicated that there is still significant room to make improvements in specific areas, including: hiring practices, targeted recruitment practices, workplace environment, specifically for women and other diverse skilled craft workers in field operations, and in the administration of disciplinary actions that have statistically had an adverse impact on one group over others. In addition, there is room to strengthen management accountability for the achievement of diversity and EEO metrics. The following is a detailed description:

**Hiring Practices:** The results indicate that white males are, on average, more likely to be selected for employment than white women or candidates of color.

**Targeted Recruitment:** Although the organization has employed a number of targeted recruitment programs and initiatives to source and recruit diverse candidates, including women and people of color, the hiring results and retention efforts can be improved by employing innovative best and *next* practices.

**Workplace Environment:** Particularly in highway operations in the field, evidence indicates that the work environment has an adverse impact on women, people of color, and other broadly diverse groups of skilled craft employees.

**Accountability:** Management focus and accountability must be strengthened in order to achieve EEO goals.

The deficiencies and conditions described herein are symptomatic of an organization that could benefit from an organizational assessment to identify specific problems, catalysts, gaps, and weaknesses. This assessment should also include a comprehensive analysis of the state of NCDOT's culture and inner workings, both from systematic and operational perspectives. The findings of this study would pave the way for solid and substantial transformation and enhancements that would yield the desired results, including improved diversity and inclusion, EEO and Affirmative Action. NCDOT also recognizes that:

- Achieving diversity and EEO/AA metrics is not the only answer
- The organization's reputation, internal culture, policies, and management practices have a critical role in attracting and retaining a diverse workforce
- Managers must be held accountable for achieving diversity/EEO goals

As the world continues to grow more diverse, NCDOT's customers and stakeholders mirror the world, and it is our desire to align our organization with this reality, as reflected in the diversity of our employee population. Thus, NCDOT is committed to developing and implementing a diversity and inclusion, and EEO/AA strategy to move the organization forward. This is also in line with the organization's vision, mission, and strategic goals and objectives.

## **GENERAL**

Except as provided below, any firm wishing to be considered must be properly registered with the Office of the Secretary of State. Any firm proposing to use corporate subsidiaries or subcontractors must include a statement that these companies are properly registered. If Engineers are performing the work and are in responsible charge of the work, they must be registered Professional Engineers in the State of North Carolina and must have a good ethical and professional standing. It will be the responsibility of the selected private firm to verify the registration of any corporate subsidiary or subcontractor prior to submitting a Letter of Interest. Firms which are not providing engineering services need not be registered with the North Carolina Board of Examiners for Engineers and Surveyors. Some of the services being solicited may not require a license. It is the responsibility of each firm to adhere to all laws of the State of North Carolina.

### **Professional Liability Insurance**

The firm must have the financial ability to undertake the work and assume the liability. The selected firm(s) will be required to furnish proof of Professional Liability insurance coverage in the minimum amount of \$1,000,000.00. The firm(s) must have an adequate accounting system to identify costs

chargeable to the project. Evidence of an acceptable accounting system may be audited prior to official award.

### **Assurance of Nondiscrimination**

The North Carolina Department of Transportation, in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252, 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d to 2000d-4) and the Regulations, hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, disadvantaged business enterprises will be afforded full and fair opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award. In accordance with other related nondiscrimination authorities, bidders and contractors will also not be discriminated against on the grounds of sex, age, disability, low-income level, or limited English proficiency in consideration for an award.

### **DEFINITIONS**

Affirmative Action Plan: Affirmative Action Plan" means: a written document detailing the positive action steps the NC Department of Transportation will take to assure internal equal employment opportunity.

Equal employment opportunity program: the total NC Department of Transportation program including the affirmative action plans for ensuring compliance with State and Federal requirements both in State highway agency internal employment.

Minority groups: An employee may be included in the minority group to which he or she appears to belong, or is regarded in the community as belonging. As defined by U.S. Federal agencies for employment purposes, minority group persons in the U.S. are identified as Blacks (not of Hispanic origin), Hispanics, Asian or Pacific Islanders, and American Indians or Alaskan Natives as defined by 23 CFR 230.305.

### **SCOPE OF WORK**

The North Carolina Department of Transportation is currently seeking a consulting firm to design and implement a comprehensive Diversity and Inclusion and EEO review and assessment, and to develop and implement a Diversity and Inclusion, EEO/AA strategy to address present and emerging organizational challenges. The details of this assignment are follows:

1. Design and implement an organizational and cultural assessment of the current state of NCDOT's Diversity & Inclusion, EEO/AA by examining culture, practices, policies, programs, and initiatives. Include an operational assessment of the systems and tools used to support sourcing, hiring, EEO and Affirmative Action.
  - 1.1 Using OD methodology, design a customized organizational assessment process that may include both qualitative and quantitative methods including surveys, focus groups, and interviews.
  - 1.2 Work with organizational leaders to define parameters for implementing the assessment in terms of employee population, site location other demographics.

- 1.3 Work with an assigned internal project manager to compile assessment questions and other implementation specifications
  - 1.4 Develop and implement a communication strategy
  - 1.5 Administer the organizational assessment across NCDOT
2. Conduct a full analysis of all assessment findings and outcomes, including the identification and interpretation of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges, and summarize the findings.
  - 2.1 Conduct an analysis of the data
  - 2.2 Compile an overall report that presents the findings, conclusions, observations, and recommendations, and
  - 2.3 Compile a PowerPoint presentation and
  - 2.4 Compile an executive summary of the highlights of the assessment report
  - 2.5 Prepare a list of questions and answers to facilitate ad hoc conversations and discussions
3. Present a summary of the findings and recommendations to appropriate levels of governance and organizational decision makers.
  - 3.1 Present the report to the organization's senior leadership team, management, and key staff. (May involve a minimum of 3 meetings)
  - 3.2 Facilitate conversations and discussions with senior leaders, management and key staff as requested.
  - 3.3 Facilitate communications and feedback meetings to crystallize recommendations, and to manage expectations and realities.
  - 3.4 Assist managers to identify solutions to address gaps and weaknesses.
4. Develop and implement a Diversity and Inclusion and EEO/AA strategy for improvement and enhancement.
  - 4.1 Utilizing the Assessment report, develop and document a diversity and inclusion and EEO/AA strategy with mission, goals and objectives, actions, milestones and measurements.
  - 4.2 Assist the organization to establish implementation teams, champions, and ambassadors.
5. Serve as subject matter/hand-on consultant, and coach to implement improvements for the EEO program
  - 5.1 Review EEO/AA metrics, policies, and practices, and
  - 5.2 Provide advice and assistance to prepare reports 2018 FHWA work plan
  - 5.3 Provide advice and assistance to prepare the 2018 EEO State plan activities for submission in 2019.
  - 5.4 Make recommendations, and assist the organization to implement diversity and EEO sourcing and recruiting organizational best practices.
  - 5.5 Establish EEO/diversity committees, focus groups, and task forces.
6. Develop and implement diversity and inclusion, EEO and sexual harassment training/train the trainer.

- 6.1 Recommend other diversity and inclusion training utilizing the assessment report data
- 6.2 Design and deliver sexual harassment training
- 6.3 Design and implement train the trainer materials and web-based training options

**PROPOSED CONTRACT TIME: ONE YEAR**

**PROPOSED CONTRACT PAYMENT TYPE:** The contract payment type shall be **LUMP SUM OR COST - PLUS AGAINST A CONTRACT MAXIMUM**, varying per Task Order and based on the scope of work and other factors as appropriate, and as agreed between the consultant and the NCDOT.

Firms selected for an interview will be required to bring a detailed budget for the project in a separate sealed envelope marked "Price Proposal". The Price Proposal must include a schedule of hourly billing rates for any additional services outside the scope of work and deliverables, and any reimbursable services, including copies, mail, and mileage.

Billing should occur on the basis of milestones, as supported by monthly status reports corresponding to the required scope of work and deliverables.

**SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS**

**Format**

ALL LOIs ARE LIMITED TO **FIFTEEN (15)** PAGES, EXCLUDING RS-2 FORMS, COVER SHEET AND TABLE OF CONTENTS, AND SHALL BE TYPED 8 ½" X 11" SHEETS, SINGLE SPACED, ONE SIDED. **LOIs CONTAINING MORE THAN FIFTEEN (15) PAGES WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.**

**ALL LOIs MUST BE SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY** IN .PDF FORMAT USING SOFTWARE SUCH AS ADOBE, CUTEPDF PDF WRITER, DOCUDESK DESKPDF, ETC.

**TIME FOR SUBMISSION**

LOIs SHALL BE RECEIVED ELECTRONICALLY **NO LATER THAN 12:00 P.M., MAY 29, 2018.** NO EXCEPTIONS. **LOIs RECEIVED AFTER THIS DEADLINE WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.**

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION**

The LOI should be sent as a .pdf file, **through NCDOT's File Transfer System (FTS)**, to **mtmclean@ncdot.gov**. The FTS will send you an electronic receipt when your LOI is **uploaded** to NCDOT's FTS. Paper copies are not required. The subject line should contain the Firm's Name, and **"LOI for NCDOT EEO Supportive Services."**

If an interested firm does not have an FTS account, they should send a request through regular e-mail to **mtmclean@ncdot.gov**. A response will be sent via the FTS system that will provide a login username, password, and login procedures.

## **COMPLETE SUBMISSION**

Firms submitting LOIs are encouraged to carefully check them for conformance to the requirements stated above (and any other requirements in this Advertisement). If LOIs are submitted late, exceed the maximum number of pages, are sent by any means other than NCDOT's FTS system, or are sent to any address other than [mtmclean@ncdot.gov](mailto:mtmclean@ncdot.gov), they will be disqualified.

The NCDOT reserves the right to reject all LOIs and not proceed with procurement.

The NCDOT reserves the right to waive any technicality in LOIs, or notify the Firm(s) of such technicality and allow the Firm(s) up to two (2) business days to rectify the technicality.

All correspondence and questions concerning this RFLOI should be directed to **Marolyn McLean, Program Assistant for Office of Civil Rights** at [mtmclean@ncdot.gov](mailto:mtmclean@ncdot.gov).

IF APPLICABLE, questions may be submitted electronically only, to the contact above. Responses will be issued in the form of an addendum available to all interested parties. Interested parties should also send a request, by email only, to the person listed above to be placed on a public correspondence list to ensure future updates regarding the RFLOI or other project information can be conveyed. Questions must be submitted to the person listed above no later than **MAY 21, 2018 AT 5:00 P.M. EST**. The last addendum will be issued no later than **May 22, 2018**.

**NOTE: To adhere to the Timeframe, a Notice to Proceed is expected to be issued shortly after (a) firm(s)/team(s) is/are selected. All firm(s)/team(s) submitting a LETTER OF INTEREST should make sure that their rates and overheads are current and have been audited by NCDOT.**

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

The following is a general description of the selection process:

A Selection Team will be convened to evaluate proposals received in accordance with the schedule and evaluation criteria stated in this RFLOI. The Selection Team will rank the consulting candidates (firms, teams and/or individuals), and will short list a group of finalists for a personal interview which will provide most qualified consultant(s) for each Task or group of tasks.

The Selection Team will then negotiate with the most qualified consultant(s) firm, based on a thorough and detailed scope of services, and will reach agreement on terms and fees for professional services valid for the period of engagement. In the event that an agreement cannot be reached, the Selection Team reserves the right to terminate negotiations with that consultant and will commence negotiations with the next most qualified consultant.

The Selection Team may, at the NCDOT's discretion, choose any number of firms to provide the services being solicited. Selection of any firm and/or team is subject to the approval of the NCDOT.

## **SELECTION CRITERIA**

**All firms who submit responsive letters of interest will be considered.**

Responses to this RFLOI will be evaluated in accordance with the following criteria:

1. **30%** = Demonstrated knowledge and experience designing and implementing an organizational development assessment to evaluate D&I, EEO, and AA programs, practices, and procedures, (both strategic and operational) through an entire cycle of design, implementation, analysis, reporting, feedback, communications, and action planning, incorporating best practices and industry innovations.

2. **25%** = Knowledge of Diversity and Inclusion, EEO, Affirmative Action and compliance laws, programs and practices, including the implementation and interpretation of metrics and results, both on the federal and state level.

3. **10%** = Knowledge and experience developing and delivering diversity and inclusion, EEO/AA training and development.

4. **20%** = General knowledge and experience in the transportation industry. Experience performing diversity and inclusion and EEO/AA work in the transportation industry.

5. **5%** = The firm has been in operation for a minimum of 10 years

6. **10%** = The Firm's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Participation.

## **SUBMISSION ORGANIZATION AND INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS**

The LOI should be addressed to **Marolyn McLean, Program Assistant for Office of Civil Rights** and must include the name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address of the prime consultant's contact person for this RFLOI.

In addition to the requirements above, under Consultant Credentials and Scope of Work and Deliverables, the LOIs must also include the information outlined below:

### **Chapter 1 - Introduction**

The Introduction should demonstrate the consultant's overall qualifications to fulfill the requirements of the scope of work and should contain the following elements of information:

- Expression of firm's interest in the work;
- Statement of whether the firm is registered with the Office of Secretary of State;
- Statement regarding firm's(') possible conflict of interest for the work;
- Statement Acknowledging receipt of Addendum; and
- Summation of information contained in the letter of interest.

### **Chapter 2 - Team Qualifications**

This chapter should elaborate on the general information presented in the introduction, to establish the credentials and experience of the consultant to undertake this type of effort. The following must be included:

1. Identify, at a minimum, three (3) recent similar projects the firm, acting as the prime contractor, has conducted which demonstrates its ability to conduct and manage the project. Provide a synopsis of each project and include the date completed, contact name and title, phone number, and email address.
2. If subconsultants are involved, provide corresponding information describing their qualifications as requested in bullet number 1 above.

### **Chapter 3 - Team Experience**

This chapter must provide the names, classifications, and location of the firm's employees and resources to be assigned to the advertised work; and the professional credentials and experience of the persons assigned to the project, along with any unique qualifications of key personnel. Although standard personnel resumes may be included, identify pertinent team experience to be applied to this project. Specifically, the Department is interested in the experience, expertise, and total quality of the consultant's proposed team. If principals of the firm will not be actively involved in the study/contract/project, do not list them. The submittal shall clearly indicate the Consultant's Project Manager, other key Team Members and his/her qualifications for the proposed work. Also, include the team's organization chart for the Project / Plan. A



Capacity Chart / Graph (available work force) should also be included. Any other pertinent information should also be listed in this section.

**Note:** If a project team or subconsultant encounters personnel changes, or any other changes of significance dealing with the company, NCDOT should be notified immediately.

**Chapter 4 - Technical Approach**

The consultant shall provide information on its understanding of, and approach to accomplish, this project, including their envisioned scope for the work and any innovative ideas/approaches, and a schedule to achieve the dates outlined in this RFLOI (if any project-specific dates are outlined below).

**SUBMISSION SCHEDULE AND KEY DATES**

Provided below is the schedule for milestones in this RFLOI process, listed in order of occurrence. NCDOT reserves the right to change any or all of these dates as it deems necessary or convenient in its discretion.

**RFLOI RELEASE – May 15, 2018**

**DEADLINE FOR QUESTIONS – May 21, 2018 BY 5:00 P.M. EST**

**ISSUE FINAL ADDENDUM – May 22, 2018**

**DEADLINE FOR LOI SUBMISSION – May 29, 2018 BY 12 P.M. EST**

**SHORTLIST ANNOUNCED \* - June 6, 2018**

**INTERVIEWS - THE WEEK OF JUNE 4, 2018**

**FIRM SELECTION AND NOTIFICATION \*\* - JUNE 12, 2018**

**ANTICIPATED NOTICE TO PROCEED – JUNE 18, 2018**

\* Notification will **ONLY** be sent to shortlisted firms.

\*\* Notification will **ONLY** be sent to selected firms.

**CONTRACT MANAGEMENT**

The NCDOT EEO Manager will serve as the agreement administrator for the contract, and will be the primary point of contact for the consultant after award.

